

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1-27. (Canceled)

28. (Previously Presented) An apparatus for attachment to an inlet end of a conduit in fluid communication with a remote pump for removing liquid from a pool of liquid, the apparatus comprising:

a pair of shallow ovoidal sections that mount about the inlet end of the conduit, each section having an arcuate interior surface, the sections forming a hollow body having a substantially elliptical cross-section, wherein the hollow body freely sinks in a pool of liquid to rest on an underlying surface of the pool of liquid;

a first series of coaxial peripheral ribs extending from an interior surface of one of the shallow ovoidal sections, each rib having a continuous ovoidal shape;

a second series of coaxial peripheral ribs extending from an interior surface of the other of the shallow ovoidal sections, each rib having a continuous ovoidal shape;

a hinge assembly connecting the pair of shallow ovoidal sections at adjacent peripheral edges of each section along the central diameter of the hollow body; and

wherein the pair of sections form a single elongate opening extending about a majority of the central diameter of the hollow body in a generally horizontal plane between the sections, the single elongate opening allowing liquid to ingress from the pool to the interior of the hollow body and the inlet of the conduit;

wherein the arcuate interior surface of the sections provides for laminar flow of liquid between the opening and the inlet end of the conduit within the hollow body.

29. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 28 wherein the area of the opening is 10-20 times larger than the area of the inlet end of the conduit, thereby providing a lower velocity of the liquid through the opening compared to the velocity of the liquid through the inlet end of the conduit.

30. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 28 further comprising a casing positioning about the inlet to the conduit within the interior of the hollow body and spaced apart from the opening, the casing having a strainer to prevent particle from entering the conduit from the interior of the hollow body and the pool of liquid.